

VZCZCXYZ0010
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHVL #0620 3231526
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 191526Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY VILNIUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3898

UNCLAS VILNIUS 000620

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: LITHUANIAN MEDIA REPEAT AMERICAN JOURNALISTS'
REPORTING ON ALLEGED CIA PRISON

REF: VILNIUS 549

¶1. SUMMARY: Lithuanian media on November 19 widely repeated reports published online by ABC News and the Washington Post providing further information about a CIA prison that was said to exist in Lithuania from March 2004 to November 2005. The reports said that the likely site of the alleged prison was at a former riding stable in the Vilnius suburb of Antaviliai, a site now used by the Lithuanian security services. GOL officials declined comment on the reports. End summary.

¶2. Lithuanian TV and online news media picked up reports by ABC News and the Washington Post that provided additional detail on what they said was a likely site for an alleged CIA prison for terrorist detainees. Basic information about the alleged prison already had appeared (reftel) in the Lithuanian media, which relied on reporting by ABC News. The new articles repeat allegations that the alleged prison was located on the grounds of a former riding stable, which they stated was purchased by the now-defunct American company Elite LLC and staffed by a rotating group of "tight-lipped" American guards, according to neighbors. The articles also alleged that the prison was made up of "prefabricated pods" built inside a barn at the site, that the renovated buildings contained 110-volt American electric outlets, and that all materials used in the construction were shipped from the site in containers and not disposed of locally.

¶3. The Washington Post article quoted Domas Grigaliunas, identified as a former Lithuanian military counterintelligence official who claimed to be involved in early planning for the site. In the article, he said, "I have no documents to prove it, and I never worked in any prisons, but I believe they existed here." The ABC news article also cited an unnamed "current Lithuanian government official" as a source of information.

¶4. GOL officials have declined to comment to local media about the substance of the latest reports. Arvydas Anusauskas, chairman of the Seimas (parliament) National Security and Defense Committee investigating whether such a prison existed, said only that the committee would talk to all officials who might have knowledge of the alleged prison.

¶5. Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius said, "To tell the truth, everything I read today in the press about foreign publications, I understand, was republished from what was told by our press." He said he did not know the identity of the anonymous official cited by ABC.

¶6. Foreign Minister Vygaudas Usackas said the continuing reporting on the issue was not helping Lithuania's image. "There are more important things in Lithuania than spending two days denying gossip of ABC journalists and the shadow they cast on Lithuania." He said it was important for Lithuania to finish its investigation in order to dispel rumors and know facts.

DERSE